

BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN
12TH DISTRICT, NEW JERSEY

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3012

168 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-5801

DISTRICT OFFICE:
850 BEAR TAVERN ROAD, SUITE 201
EWING, NEW JERSEY 08628
(609) 883-0026

WEBSITE: WATSONCOLEMAN.HOUSE.GOV

October 19, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
The President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Lieutenant General Scott A. Spellmon
Chief of Engineers and Commanding General of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
441 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20314

The Honorable Shalanda Young
Acting Administrator
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear President Biden, Lieutenant General Spellmon, and Administrator Young,

I write to you today to request that funds from the Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act (P.L.117-43, H.R. 5305) be allocated to the Green Brook Sub Basin Army Corps Project located in my district following the deadly and damaging Hurricane Ida.

On September 1, 2021, Hurricane Ida travelled through the Northeast region dumping record levels of rainfall for hours. In New Jersey, some towns experienced almost 10 inches of rainfall, which resulted in severe flash flooding and 30 deaths, making Hurricane Ida the second deadliest storm in New Jersey history. Recently, Congress passed a Disaster Supplemental which includes vital funding for the United States Army Corps of Engineers to respond to Hurricane Ida. In order to address the damage caused by Hurricane Ida in New Jersey as well as strengthen our defenses against the next major natural disaster, it is critical that sufficient funding is designated to the repair and construction of the Green Brook Sub Basin Project.

The Green Brook Sub Basin project area covers 65 square miles and includes portions of three counties and 13 municipalities, all of which are continually subject to severe and devastating flood damage. According to initial analysis from the USACE New York District engineering and economics team and provisional data from the United States Geological Survey, Hurricane Ida

closely matched the flood of Record Elevation of 42.13 feet with river flows peaking at 82,600 cubic feet per second measured at the Calco Dam gage on the Raritan River near Bound Brook in the Green Brook Sub Basin. Based on the discharge versus frequency curve for the river, it is estimated to have been between a 500-year to 1,000-year event.

We are fortunate that part of the Green Brook project, the Bound Brook portion, was completed prior to Hurricane Ida thus significant damage to those areas was prevented. Flood waters in many areas of Bound Brook reached the tops of the levees and floodwalls, but if the levees and floodwalls had not been in place, flooding in Bound Brook would have been several feet deep and up to 9 to 14 feet deep along portions of Main Street. Based on USACE economic modelling, it is estimated that over \$200 million in damages were prevented by the project within the line of protection of Bound Brook, which includes 80 commercial buildings, 900 homes, and municipal and public properties.

As climate change continues to negatively impact our communities, it is critical to respond to the growing threat of more severe and more frequent storms like Hurricane Ida. This means not only repairing the damage sustained by existing flood protection projects, but also accelerating unfinished or new projects to ensure that our communities can withstand these worsening natural disasters. Hurricane Ida reminded us that climate change is no longer a distant threat. Climate change is here, and it is damaging communities and killing Americans. For New Jerseyans, Hurricane Ida was the second deadly storm they had experienced in just this century. Hurricane Ida also highlighted the new and unexpected damage that climate change is creating as many New Jerseyans were defenseless against catastrophic flooding.

I strongly urge you to dedicate the requisite funding required to remediate damage sustained to the Green Brook Sub Basin Project so that our communities can withstand the next natural disaster. I request \$17-20 million in order to repair the damage sustained to the completed portions of the project, along with additional funding for the acceleration of construction on other portions of the project in areas of Middlesex Borough, New Jersey in order to reduce flood risk sooner.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this request.

Sincerely,



BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN
Member of Congress